DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 130 207 CG 010 888

AUTHOR Marion, Paul B.; And Others
TITLE Living in an International Residence Hall as an Influence on Selected Attitudes of American College Students: Research and Implications.
PUB DATE Apr 76
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (Chicago, Illinois, April 11-14, 1976); For related document, see CG 010 887; Best copy available

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Housing; College Students; Cultural Awareness; *Dormitories; *Foreign Students; Higher Education; Housing; *Interaction Process Analysis; *Intercultural Programs; Research Projects; *Student Attitudes

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at North Carolina State University in the Spring of 1976 to compare American students who lived in an international residence hall during 1975-76 with American students who lived in conventional residence halls during 1974-75 as to their international attitudes, international activities, and interaction with foreign students. The international hall housed approximately 140 American and 50 foreign students, while the conventional halls included several foreign students scattered throughout each hall. There were no significant differences between the two groups as to level of involvement in international activities. American students who roomed with a foreign student in the international hall expressed attitudes which were more internationally-oriented than American students in conventional halls or those who lived in the international hall with another American as their roommate. American students living in the international hall had a significantly higher level of interaction with foreign students than American students who lived in conventional halls, but not in close proximity to foreign students. American students who roomed with a foreign student in the international hall had a significantly higher level of interaction with foreign students than American students who lived in the international hall, but did not room with a foreign student. (Author)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED130207

LIVING IN AN INTERNATIONAL RESIDENCE HALL AS AN INFLUENCE ON SELECTED ATTITUDES OF AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS: RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS

Paul B. Marion
Thomas H. Stafford, Jr.
Con K. Kimura

North Carolina State University

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CG 010 888

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Personnel and Guidance Association
Chicago, Illinois

April, 1976

LIVING IN AN INTERNATIONAL RESIDENCE HALL AS AN INFLUENCE ON SELECTED ATTITUDES OF AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS: RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

In the spring of 1975, a study to investigate the relationship between residence hall proximity to foreign students and the following variables for American students was conducted at North Carolina State University.

a. International attitudes
b. International activities
c. Interaction with foreign students

It was hypothesized that American students who had lived in proximity to foreign students during the year would be more likely to report an international rather than a nationalistic attitude, and would be more likely to have participated in international activities and interacted with foreign students. American students who lived in proximity to foreign students were further divided into roommate and non-roommate categories for comparisons with a non-proximity group. During the time of this study, the 35 foreign students who lived in university residence halls were not concentrated in any one building or area.

Results of this initial study indicated no relationship between proximity and international activities unless the proximity involved rooming with a foreign student but did indicate a very strong relationship between proximity and interaction with foreign students. The study suggested that interaction with foreign students and participation in international activities for American students might be influenced by rooming with a foreign student.

During the 1975-76 academic year, an International Residence Hall was initiated as a new residence hall alternative at N.C. State. The hall, composed of male residents, was designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To locate the majority of foreign students in one hall so that programs with an international theme could be focused in that hall.
2. To facilitate cross cultural learning which may result from American and foreign students living in proximity.
3. To provide an alternative resident hall for American students who had international interests.
4. To provide a transition for foreign students to the culture of North Carolina State University and the surrounding community. Almost all of the foreign students in the International Hall were new foreign students.

It should be mentioned, however, that during the initial year of operation, former residents of the International Hall were given priority for retaining their rooms. Many American students probably did so not because of an interest in the International House but rather as a convenience to retain their former rooms.

In the following study, responses of American students from the International Hall have been compared to American students from the previous study. This comparison was designed to indicate whether or not proximity within an International Hall is related in different ways to international attitudes, international activities, and interaction with foreign students than is proximity within a conventional residence hall.

In addition, the study attempts to evaluate the International House in another respect by comparing the perception of the residence hall environment as reported by foreign students who lived in the International House with that reported by foreign students who lived in conventional halls.

Method

Sample

In the 1975 study with conventional halls, two groups of American students were selected. The first group, called proximity (N=257) was composed of all students in "Long-corridor halls" who lived next to or across from a foreign student during the fall, 1974 semester and those who lived in the same suite with a foreign student in "suite halls." The proximity group was further divided into two categories called roommate (N=27), composed of American students who roomed with a foreign student; and non-roommate (N=230), composed of all others who did not room with a foreign student.

The second group was called non-proximity and was composed of 251 American students selected by the systematic sampling procedure from students who lived in sections of residence halls which were not in proximity to foreign students, i.e., different floors in the "suite halls" or different sections of the same floor in "long corridor halls."

The sample for the 1976 study consisted of all 139 American students who lived in the International House, including 25 who roomed with a foreign student and 114 who did not; 51 foreign students who lived in the International House and, for the comparison of residence hall perceptions, 19 foreign students who were scattered throughout conventional residence halls.

Data Collection

Data for the study were collected by a questionnaire (attached) which was developed by the authors to measure international attitudes, international activities, interaction with foreign students, and amount of foreign travel and by the University Residence Environmental Scale (URES), an instrument designed to measure perception of residence hall environments. A more detailed description of the measurement of these variables is presented in a subsequent section. Residence hall staff members distributed the questionnaires to the rooms of students during the middle of the spring, 1975 semester and collected them during the following week.

Response Rates

Usable questionnaires were returned by the following percentages of each group.

I.	American Students	
	A. Proximity	
	1. Roommates	
	Conventional halls (1975)	70.4%
	International hall (1976)	56.0%
	2. Non-roommates	
	Conventional halls (1975)	58.3%
	International hall (1976)	55.3%
	B. Non-Proximity-conventional halls (1975)	63.7%
II.	Foreign Students (1976)	
	A. International hall	58.8%
	B. Conventional halls	63.2%

Measurement and Classification of Variables

Internationalism Scale

Questions A thru R on the second page of the questionnaire were used to measure international attitude. Responses to each item on a five point scale from "Disagree very much" to "Agree very much" were added for each respondent. The internationalism scale thus produced could range from 18 to 90. A low score on this scale represents a nationalistic attitude and a high score represents an internationalistic attitude. Students not completing all items used for this scale were not included in this data analysis.

Index of International Activities

Questions A thru G on the lower half of the first page of the questionnaire were used to measure international activities. Individual responses to each of these questions were categorized into a four-point scale ranging from

no activity to very high activity. (Cutting points used to categorized responses varied for each question and are available from the authors.) Categorized responses for these seven questions were combined to produce a final Index of International Activity score which could range from zero to 21.

Index of Interaction with Foreign Students

The first two and last two questions on the first page of the questionnaire were used to measure interaction with foreign students. As with the previously described index, individual responses were categorized into a four-point scale and then combined to produce an Index of Interaction with Foreign Students score which could range from zero to sixteen.

Foreign Travel

Item C on the top half of the first page of the questionnaire was used to measure foreign travel. Responses indicating travel to three or more countries were combined into one category for data analyses.

URES Subscales

Involvement - Degree of commitment to the house and residents; amount of interaction and feeling of friendship in the house.

Emotional Support - Extent of manifest concern for others in the house; efforts to aid one another with academic and personal problems; emphasis on open and honest communication.

Independence - Diversity of residents' behaviors allowed without social sanctions, versus socially proper and conformist behavior.

Traditional Social Orientation - Stress on dating, going to parties, and other "Traditional" heterosexual interactions.

Competition - The degree to which a wide variety of activities such as dating, grades, etc., are cast into a competitive framework.

Academic Achievement - Extent to which strictly classroom and academic accomplishments and concerns are prominent in the house.

Intellectuality - Emphasis on cultural, artistic and other scholarly intellectual activities in the house, as distinguished from strictly classroom achievements.

Order and Organization - Amount of formal structure or organization (e.g., rules, schedules, following established procedures, etc) in the house; neatness.

Student Influence - Extent to which student residents (not staff or administration) perceive they control the running of the house; formulate and enforce the rules, control use of the money, selection of staff, food, roommate policies, etc.

Innovation - Organizational and individual spontaneity of behaviors and ideas; number and variety of activities, new activities.

Findings

Table 1 compares the relationships of major concern for the 1975 and the 1976 studies. In the 1975 study there were no differences among the mean scores on the Internationalism scale for the two proximity and the non-proximity groups. In the 1976 study the mean score for American students in the International Hall who did not room with a foreign student was essentially the same as in the 1975 study (46.8 and 47.5, respectively); however, the mean score for International Hall students who did room with a foreign student was somewhat higher than for all other groups. Although not statistically significant, this difference is based on small number of respondents and indicates that students who room with a foreign student within an International Hall setting are more likely to have international attitudes than those who live in conventional halls. Significant differences were found on this scale between International Hall students who roomed with a foreign student and both those who did not and those in conventional halls in the 1975 study. This finding provides a strong indication that living in the International Hall and with a foreign student is associated with a higher international attitude. For those students who live close to but not with a foreign student, the International hall environment does not result in a different relationship than for those who live in conventional halls.

The next variable shown on Table 1, Index of International Activities, does not reflect a different pattern of results when proximity groups from the International Hall and conventional halls are compared. Data from the 1975 study indicate that in conventional halls, proximity to a foreign student is not related to participation in international activities unless the proximity involves rooming with a foreign student. Mean scores on this scale for the roommate groups are approximately equal for those in the International (5.0) and in conventional halls (5.5). Mean scores for non-roommates are likewise similar (3.8 and 3.7, respectively). Of interest is the relatively low level of international activity by non-roommates in the International Hall.

The final section of Table 1 provides the same comparisons for the Index of Interaction with foreign students. For conventional halls in the 1975 study, this variable was highly related to proximity. Table 1 indicates that this interaction is likely to be even higher in the International Hall. Compared to a mean score of 3.5 for the non-proximity group from conventional halls, the mean for non-roommate groups was 6.8 in the International Hall, and 5.6 for con-

ventional halls, while the mean for the roommate category increased from 7.3 for conventional halls to 9.1 for the International Hall. This latter score reflects a very high level of interaction on a scale which ranges from 0 to 12. For both conventional halls and the International Hall, differences between proximity groups were statistically significant.

Since interaction has been found to be related to proximity in both conventional halls and the International Hall, it is also of interest to investigate the relationship between interaction and both the International Scale of the Index of International Activities. These relationships with proximity controlled, are shown in Table 2. For conventional halls in the 1975 study, single order correlation coefficients between Interaction with foreign students and both the Internationalism scale and the Index of International Activities were significantly different from zero for the non-roommate group. For non-proximity students, the interaction-activity relationship was significant.

In the 1976 study, significant relationships were found between interaction and the Index of International Activities for both the roommate and non-roommate groups.

In comparing the relationships for the two studies, the only major difference appears to be the relationship between interaction and international activities for roommates. Even though the number on which each of these correlation coefficients is based is small, the large difference between conventional halls (.27) and the International hall (.67) indicates a much higher liklihood of interaction with a foreign student being related in a positive way with participation in international activities for residents of the International Hall.

Another relationship of interest is shown in Table 3. The table provides a comparison of mean scores on the Index of Interaction with Foreign Students by number of foreign countries visited. The conventional hall column includes only those who lived in proximity to a foreign student. For every level of foreign country visitation, mean scores for students in the International Hall are higher than for students in conventional halls. In only one case, for those who have visited one foreign country, is the difference statistically significant. For the higher levels of visitation, a lack of statistical significance for substantial differences probably results from the small numbers in these categories. This analysis does indicate that given the same level of foreign country visitation, American students in the International Hall are more likely to interact with foreign students than are students who live close to foreign students in conventional halls.

In the final analysis for the 1976 study, perceptions of residence hall environment reported by foreign students who did and who did not live in the International Hall are compared. Those comparisons are shown in Table 4. For all scales except two, student influence and innovation, differences between the two groups are not significant. The first difference indicates that foreign students in the International Hall are less likely to perceive their residence hall as one in which student residents control the running of the hall, formulating rules, selecting staff and roommate policies, etc. The second difference indicates that the International Hall is less likely to be perceived as an environment in which a number and variety of new activities occur.

The difference between mean scores on a third scale, traditional social orientation, was very close to significance at the .05 level and indicates a final area in which perceptions might be different. In this case, International Hall foreign students felt their hall has less stress on dating, going to parties, and other "traditional" heterosexual interactions.

Although not shown in Table 3, a comparison of foreign students in conventional halls with American male students in conventional halls (data collected in another research project) indicated no substantial differences on each of the UkES scales.

Conclusions

Relationships found in this study indicate that proximity in a conventional residence hall may play an important role in the interaction with foreign students and possibly in the level of international activities. More significantly, the International Hall at N.C. State University appears to play an even more important role for these same variables and, in addition, may play a role in facilitation of an international attitude; however, it is important to acknowledge that this study has not been designated to indicate whether or not international attitude, international activities, or interaction result from proximity. A more appropiately designed study to include measures of changes over time and comparison of students who do and who do not choose to live near a foreign student needs to be made. This is especially true for the International Hall at N.C. State University since many of its initial American residents did not choose to live there for the purpose of being involved in international programming. Additional study would provide important implications for continuation of the International Hall or similar types of residence hall programs.

TABLE 1

MEAN SCORES ON INTERNATIONALISM SCALE, INDEX OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES, AND INDEX OF INTERACTION WITH FOREIGN STUDENTS, BY PROXIMITY

	PROXIMITY				NON-PROXIMITY
	Roommate		Non-Roommate		
	Conventional Halls (1975)	International Hall (1976)	Conventional Halls (1975)	International Hall (1976)	Conventional Halls (1975)
Internationalism Scale	47.8	53.9[a]	47.5	46.8	48.3
Variable range (18-90)					
Midpoint (54.0)					
Index of International Activities	5.5[b]	5.0	3.7	3.8	4.2
Variable range (0-21)					
Midpoint (10.5)					
Index of Interaction with Foreign Students	7.3[c]	9.1[a]	5.6[d]	6.8[d]	3.5
Variable range (0-12)					
Midpoint (6.0)					
N =	*19*	*14*	*134*	*63*	*160*

[a] Significantly different from non-roommate, International Hall and from non-proximity, conventional halls at the .05 level of significance.

[b] Significantly different from non-roommate, conventional halls at the .05 level of significance.

[c] Significantly different from non-roommate, conventional halls, and from non-proximity, conventional halls at the .05 level of singificance.

[d] Significantly different from non-proximity, conventional halls at the .05 level of significance.

TABLE 2

SINGLE ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN INDEX OF INTERACTION WITH FOREIGN STUDENTS AND BOTH INTERNATIONALISM SCALE AND INDEX OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES, BY PROXIMITY

	PROXIMITY				NON-PROXIMITY
	Roommate		Non-Roommate		
	Conventional Halls (1975)	International Hall (1976)	Conventional Halls (1975)	International Hall (1976)	Conventional Halls (1975)
Internationalism	.05	.23	.20*	.23	.08
Index of International Activities	.27	.67*	.27*	.30*	.35*
N =	*19*	*14*	*134*	*63*	*160*

*Significantly different from zero at .05 level of significance.

TABLE 3

MEAN INDEX OF INTERACTION SCORES,
BY NUMBER OF FOREIGN COUNTIRES VISITED

Number of Foreign Countries Visited	Conventional Halls (1975)		International Hall (1976)	
None	5.8	(111)	6.6	(52)
One	5.7*	(25)	7.9	(9)
Two	5.7	(9)	9.2	(5)
Three or more	6.6	(8)	8.4	(11)

*Significantly different from International Hall at .05 level of significance

NOTE: Numbers in parenthesis represent the number of scores on which the mean is based.

TABLE 4

MEAN UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENTAL SCALE (URES)
SCORES REPORTED BY FOREIGN STUDENTS, BY TYPE OF RESIDENCE

	International Hall	Conventional Halls
Involvement	4.5	5.3
Emotional support	4.7	5.5
Independence	5.4	5.2
Traditional Social Orientation	3.7	5.2
Competition	3.1	3.9
Academic Achievement	4.8	4.6
Intellectuality	2.9	3.6
Order and Organization	5.1	6.5
Influence	4.9*	6.2
Innovation	3.7*	5.1
N =	*31*	*13*

*Significantly lower than the score for Conventional Halls at the .05 level of significance.

INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The Department of Student Affairs Planning and Research is conducting a research project with a selected group of students who live in the residence halls at N. C. State. The purpose of the project is to determine the attitudes and activities of this sample group of students concerning international issues.

The accuracy of the results will depend on the percentage of students who complete the questionnaire and on how accurately each student answers the questions. Therefore, please take a few minutes to answer the questions below and return the questionnaire to your Resident Advisor. Thank you for your cooperation.

_____ A. How many different foreign students have you had contact with during this academic year?

_____ B. If you have met any foreign students, how well do you know the one that you know best?

1. Not very well
2. Fairly well
3. Very well

_____ C. How many foreign countries have you visited, if any?

_____ D. Is your roommate a foreign student? (circle one) Yes No

Please estimate the number of times during this academic year that you have done the following things:

_____ A. Discussed international relations, foreign policy, the U.N. or other international issues outside the classroom.

_____ B. Talked with others outside of the classroom about people and cultural events in other countries?

_____ C. Attended foreign movie(s).

_____ D. Read book(s) by author(s) from another country other than book(s) required for your courses.

_____ E. Attended concert(s), theater(s), or exhibition(s) which featured the art, music, or drama of another country.

_____ F. Attended panel discussion(s), lecture(s), or other educationally-oriented program(s) on international issues other than those required for a course.

_____ G. Attended any of the International Week activities at the University Student Center which took place November 14-16. Please estimate the number of different activities that you attended.

_____ H. Had a conversation or were involved in a discussion with a foreign student.

_____ I. Went to a movie, party, concert, lecture, athletic contest, restaurant or other social, educational recreational or entertainment event with a foreign student.

PLEASE CONTINUE ON BACK

The following statements represent many different and opposing points of view. There are no right or wrong answers and the best answer to each statement is your personal opinion. Please do not put down what you think you ought to feel, but what you do feel, and do not be especially concerned as to whether or not your opinions are "consistent".

Mark each statement in the left margin according to how much you agree or disagree with it. Please mark every one. Mark 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 depending on how you feel in each case.

1. Disagree very much
2. Disagree somewhat
3. No opinion
4. Agree somewhat
5. Agree very much

____ A. In the interests of humanity, America's doors should be opened wide to immigrants from all nations and current restrictive quotas should be abolished.

____ B. It would be a good idea if all the races were to intermarry until there was only one race in the world.

____ C. Our country should not participate in any international organization which requires that we give up any of our national rights or freedom of action.

____ D. It would be better to be a citizen of the world than of any particular country.

____ E. The United States should concentrate upon keeping itself strong and should not get involved in the affairs of other countries.

____ F. We should teach our children to uphold the welfare of all people everywhere even though it may be against the best interest of our own country.

____ G. In the interest of permanent peace, we should be willing to settle absolutely all differences with other nations within the framework of a World Government.

____ H. Immigrants should not be permitted to come into our country if they compete with our own workers.

____ I. The United Nations should be strengthened by giving it control of armed forces of all the member nations.

____ J. Only a show of military strength can prevent the Russians and Chinese Communists from trying to gain world domination.

____ K. Our country is probably no better than many others.

____ L. It is an idle dream to expect to abolish war.

____ M. Our country should not cooperate in any international trade agreements which attempt to better world economic conditions at our expense.

____ N. Any form of international government is impossible.

____ O. A person who loves his fellow man should refuse to engage in any war, no matter how serious the consequences to his country may be.

____ P. If an international police force is established, the United States should retain a large army and navy anyway so that we can be certain of having military forces when we need them.

____ Q. All military training should be abolished.

____ R. The United States should not trade with any communist country.